



## City of Alameda • California

March 9, 2011

Dear President Hartigan and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the month of February, and to look forward to some of the projects which will be coming up.

**Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda).** The January Activity Report is included in your Board Packet.

A random check in February of the computer workstations at the Main Library found all Internet workstations on the first floor operational and one Internet workstation on the second floor out of service.

Executive Assistant Marsha Merrick will be out of the office for the month of March recovering from surgery. If there are issues with the Board Packet, please let me know, because I did it myself.

**Main Library Update.** The solar panels are coming! Really! Sun, Light & Power, our Project Manager from Public Works Flavio Barrantes, Bill Garvine from AMP, and me met for a coordination meeting on February 24. There are still a few issues to be worked out before Community Development will issue the permit to start the build but they are very close. There will be a sound test to see how loud the work will be which will determine work areas before open hours and during open hours. The height of the panels will be 4.5 ft. which will be barely visible as one approaches the library from Lincoln and they will be visible from the upper floors of City Hall. The decision was made to have the panels just visible enough that people will know the library has solar panels but not so tall as to take away from the aesthetics of the barrel vaults on the rooftop. Stanchions and tape at the 4.5 ft height were placed on the roof so we could see from a distance what would be visible. There was discussion regarding the roof access for the workers. Currently the only access is through the hatch near the reference work room. This would not be practical for the day to day work so two options are being considered, scaffolding or a scissors lift. I am more in favor of the scissors lift because I don't want anyone climbing the scaffolding after work hours, even if it is fenced in. Five parking spaces will be used for staging and delivery so those will be marked "no parking" during work hours for the duration of the build, they are supposed to be made available in the evenings and weekends. There will be a "crane day" at the beginning of the project to put supplies and the large inverter on the roof. Crane Day will involve closing the parking lot to enable putting the crane in the middle of the lot to allow for an appropriate angle to get materials to the roof top and for public safety as supply trucks come and go--not to have people walking under the crane in motion. The project team is aware of the need for a minimum of one week's notice before the parking lot closure. The other "big" day will be the switchover day when power will be shut down for about 6 hours. I have indicated that March 28 would be the best day because we are planning on being closed for a Staff Development Day. We can do "old school" staff training with flip charts, lectures, and handouts rather than with power point presentations. Once the build begins it should only take 5 weeks and the contract says that the project will have completed installation by April 13. The Energy Kiosk to show the real time energy savings is still being explored; Sun, Light & Power has a kiosk recommendation and AMP is looking at others. AMP secured a separate grant

that could pay for the kiosk allowing some funding to flow back into the project budget. No decisions have been made for the kiosk.

As we consider putting the real time energy kiosk in the library lobby, most likely near the location of the Alameda Animal Shelter kiosk, I asked the Animal Shelter about statistics obtained through their kiosk. Does that kiosk really help people decide to adopt dogs & cats from the Alameda shelter? Diana Barrett who is the Supervising Animal Control Officer says "Although the kiosk might get a lot of interest in the library, we don't have many people indicating upon adoption that the kiosk brought them to adopt an animal. Most adopters indicate that they checked out adoptable animals from their home computers and then responded to the shelter to adopt. Additionally, some people see a description of the animal in the local paper and come down to see it." Is it time to find a new home for the Animal Shelter kiosk? City Hall or at the Police Station? Frankly, I'm not sure where it would get more traffic than here at the Library. I'll be interested in your thoughts on this matter.

Supervising Librarian Annemarie Meyer is the proud mother of a beautiful 7 lb baby girl. Liese Margaret Calvert was born on February 12 in the afternoon. The new family is doing well.

The city's new telephone system has arrived and it is OK but is not without bugs. We are still working to get the phone tree right, some calls to Reference are lost, the paging system does not give enough talk time before cutting the speaker off, and the public service desks need a ring or two more before activating the "please call back" message. City IT is working hard to make the corrections before moving on to the next department for installation.

**Across the Pages.** The Community Reads Program, *Across the Pages* began March 1. At the March 1 City Council meeting, the Mayor presented a Proclamation to the Library proclaiming March 1-31 as Across the Pages: an Alameda Community Reads. March 1 also was the launch of our new Seed Library and Garden Tool Lending Library. Library Specialist Joel Butler held the "grand opening" and had 22 people come, 11 participated in the short orientation in order to check out seeds, and 28 seed packets were checked out. Then he rushed across the street to City Hall and gave a great presentation to the Council explaining what our "Green Thumbs, Green Minds" initiative is and what seed and tool lending libraries are and how they work. It was a fine job. We have many programs scheduled this month and the one to drop in on is the Backyard Farmer / Urban Consumer Resource Fair on March 19 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Stafford Room. We are already receiving good response to the theme and the books selected this year.

**Neighborhood Libraries Improvement Project (NLIP).** Everything is looking good for the Grand Re-opening on March 8 at 2:00 p.m. Kana Tanaka's art is installed and is beautiful. The collection came back without any real issues and is neatly shelved. The furniture is gorgeous and gives that "pop" of color in the pastels of the walls & carpet. The recycled glass countertops are wonderful, particularly the teen countertop, that one is stunning. We are all wondering how long it will be before the young folk realize that their countertop is made mostly from beer bottles! The IT installation is almost complete and the security gates will go in on March 4. Some media shelving in the children's area is backordered so we haven't brought out the children's media but it will get there soon after opening. There is still some minor tweaking to be done by staff but it all looks fabulous! Alameda Recreation & Parks Director Dale Lillard took a quick trip out to Leydecker Park/Bay Farm Island Library with Park Manager John McDonald to size up the landscaping. I had

asked if the bushes could be cut back to below the height of the handrail. They did one better, all the scraggly ivy has been removed, the weeds were cut all the way down, and bark spread on the library side as well as the park building side. It looks so much better! The electrical box that is out front is rusty and ugly, so if the rain cooperates, we hope to paint the box the same green as the recreation building.

Supervising Librarian Arta Benzie-Youssef informed me that the installation of the large art piece by Debey Zito will be installed over the weekend of March 18-20 instead of March 11-13. It is unfortunate that the press announcement went out early in the same week that Debey informed Arta of the one week delay. Corrections for the closure date were sent to the media outlets and the information is posted on the events calendar of the web page and the library Facebook page. The installation of Owen Smith's paintings should be at the end of March or first week of April. The Artists Reception is scheduled for Saturday, April 16 for all three artists beginning at 2:00 p.m. at the Bay Farm Island Library and traveling down to the West End Library for a 4:00 p.m. showing.

The West End Library landscaping project is almost complete. Dennis has been out in the rain, freezing rain, planting away. As of March 2 all the planting is complete, he still needs to connect the irrigation system, install the banner signposts, lay the weed barrier around the plantings and spread the mulch. He assures me what is left is "the easy stuff." We have already begun receiving compliments, including an email that was sent to the Mayor, Vice Mayor, former Mayor, Acting City Manager, and me. I will bring it to the Board meeting to read aloud.

As the NLIP project winds down I have asked Project Manager Laurie Kozisek to provide us with some of the budget numbers, these numbers are based on payments to date and expected additional change orders for minor work to wrap up. Laurie did not break out the two libraries separately but feels that it is almost 50-50 in cost. (the West End Library was approximately \$1.15M so that is a very good "feeling" for Laurie!)

Estimated Total Cost:

\$1,381,750 expected total to Sausal for construction

\$172,100 expected total for IT and equipment

\$140,525 expected total to Resource and Design for furniture

\$100,000 expected total for Public Art

\$100,650 expected total to PW for project management

\$336,682 expected total Noll & Tam for design and construction admin

\$10,638 building permit fees

\$5,552 special structural inspector

\$41,558 Chipman moving/storage

\$1,550 landscape chipping

\$2,291,005 TOTAL

Funding:

\$2,115,485 Measure O

\$100,000 Friends of the Library

\$75,520 Fund 317 (all of moving and part of IT)

\$2,291,005 TOTAL

MOU budget:

\$2,391,317



CIP Budget:  
\$2,450,000 for Measure O

The MOU budget is the estimate of what we thought the project would actually cost - the MOU amounts for PW labor and expenses plus the estimated amounts for consultants, construction, art, IT, etc. Essentially, everything we knew about at the time the MOU with Public Works was revised in July 2010. It does not include the landscaping or the moving, but those are fairly minor costs. The CIP budget is the budget amount for Measure O that the Council approved for the project and the amounts under "Funding" listed below is the amount of funding spent so far.

**California State Budget Reductions to Public Libraries.** The Assembly and Senate Budget Committees each took preliminary votes affecting the California Library Services Act, Public Library Foundation, and California Library Literacy Services programs in the 2011-12 Budget. The Assembly voted to make \$1.5 million in minimal cuts to both the CLSA and the PLF, and voted to spare the literacy program from any cuts. In the Senate, the Budget Committee voted to eliminate all of the funding for the three programs, which also ultimately eliminates a significant amount of corresponding federal funding for the CLSA. Due to the difference between the actions in the two houses, the library funding issues and hundreds of other cuts and programmatic changes for things such as Health and Human Services, Corrections, and redevelopment agencies, will be sent to a "Budget Conference Committee" for reconciliation.

The Budget Conference committee met on February 25. Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield asked the Department of Finance (representing the Governor), to comment on the proposals. The representative noted, "This continues our discussion of what is a state versus a local responsibility. In tough times, we can't afford to supplement library services." Surprisingly, the Legislative Analyst's Office representative who followed (who traditionally has been a supporter of the library funding in the Budget), stated, "These are difficult cuts. We lean towards the Department of Finance's recommendation." The Chairman indicated that he was concerned that the cuts would result in a loss of federal funds, to which the Department of Finance responded, "Not immediately. But yes, over time....There is no way you can get to a balanced Budget without losing some federal funds." Senator Mark Leno, a member of the Conference Committee, said lamenting the Budget cuts, "These are really Sophie's choices." Conferee Assemblyman Jim Nielsen, author of the Public Library Foundation legislation in 1982 said, "I have obviously followed this issue very closely over the years. Libraries have come up here year after year and have taken a significant haircut." He requested that the Budget Conference Committee continue to work with the California Library Association to find a more acceptable compromise. With no agreement evident between the two houses, the Chair noted that the three issues would be "left open." Nothing has been decided.

There is no further information regarding Library Legislative Day in Sacramento. To my knowledge it is still scheduled for Wednesday, March 30.

**Library Foundation.** The Library Foundation hosted the San Francisco Opera Guild on February 26 in the Stafford Room for the children's concert component of "Live @ the Library." The performance of *The Magic Flute* was extremely well received. Although the program was free, there was some concern about interest and attendance. School Resource Services Liaison Linda Valler worked with the Foundation to accept the advance reservations. The Foundation hoped for

about 100 people and a week before the event we had 128 people signed up and 17 more on a wait list. On the day of the program, nearly everyone who called in advance showed up and we were able to accommodate the wait list people. 135 people, 2/3 children the rest their adults, enjoyed the performance. The children were invited to participate as some of the story characters and in the end all of the children paraded through the "fire" and "water" to be included in the opera. There were many compliments and inquiries of what and when the next music program for children would be offered. The Foundation is discussing having the Opera Guild come back in December to present a family program of holiday selections.

The Foundation voted to approve the creation of a Technology Fund for the library. ¼ of the profit from any fundraiser or disbursement of interest earnings will be put in a Foundation Technology Fund with the intent of holding and building the funds for a new Integrated Library System for the library in 2 or 3 years from now. The Library Director will still receive a ¼ share of profit or interest earnings for the discretionary fund and the Foundation operating fund & endowment fund will receive a ½ share.

The Foundation will partner with the Friends of the Library to co-host a Library Staff lunch during National Library Week which is April 10-16. This will be the fifth year the Foundation and the Friends have honored the staff in such a way.

The next Foundation meeting will be on Monday, March 21 in the Family Study Room at 7:00 p.m.

**Friends of the Library.** The Friends voted to work with the Foundation to co-host the Library Staff lunch during National Library Week.

Angela's Bistro and Bar is again working with the local wineries to host the Friday Night Flights for local non-profits. The Friends have been asked if they would like to be the recipients again this year to which the Friends responded in the affirmative. May 6, 13, 20 and 27 will be the Friday Night Flights benefiting the Friends of the Alameda Free Library. More details as the dates approach.

**Alameda Reads.** Interviews were held for the Literacy Director position. Sue Mark, a long time contract employee for Alameda Reads, has been selected as Jordona Elderts' replacement. Sue has been teaching some of the small group classes, particularly the "News You Can Use" class. Sue is a part time teacher in the Richmond schools and will bring a new energy to Alameda Reads. She is familiar with our program, with many of the learners, and the office staff (Pat Gallagher). We are happy to welcome Sue officially to the staff of the Alameda Free Library and to lead our literacy program, Alameda Reads. We wish Jordona the best, although she will be around...as a volunteer tutor!

**America's Promise Alliance: 100 Best Communities for Young People.** America's Promise Alliance is the non-profit started by General Colin Powell and his wife Alma. The America's Promise mission is that through increasing awareness, advocating for children and engaging in a few powerful initiatives, they use the strength of their partnership network to more effectively and strategically to bring the power of the "Five Promises" to America's children – enabling children to have the resources they need to lead happier, healthier and productive lives and build a stronger

society. The Five Promises that all children need: Caring Adults; Safe Places; A Healthy Start; Effective Education; and Opportunities to Help Others. The Alliance believes that children who receive at least four of the Five Promises are much more likely than those who experience only one or zero Promises to succeed academically, socially and civically. The *100 Best Communities for Young People* is an annual competition that rewards and recognizes communities making extraordinary efforts to reduce dropout rates and provide outstanding services and supports to their youth. The Alameda Services Collaborative, under the coordination of the Social Services Human Relations Board President Cindy Wasko, Alameda applied to be one of the 100 Best Communities. Alameda was selected as one of the best 100 out of over 350 applications, a process that was quite extensive, and is the only northern California city selected. At the March 1 City Council meeting, award plaques were presented to many of the partnering organizations of which the Library is one. I have the award and would like Board input into where it should be displayed. The ASC will be applying again for a second year of recognition, so there may be more placards in our future.

**Draft Art Donation Policy.** The Art Display Committee is not ready to bring the second draft of the Art Donation Policy forward.

**Activities and Events.**

**Across the Pages: an Alameda Community Reads Program – March 1 – 31, 2011**

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|---------|---|
| March 1 | Grand opening of Seed Library and Garden Tool Lending Library, 5:00 p.m.<br>Main Library      |
| March 1 | Paws to Read. 3:45 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room (also Mar 8, 15, 22, 29)        |
| March 3 | Arm Chair Travel Program: Scotland. 7:00 p.m. West End Library                                |
| March 4 | MAC Users Group. 10:00 a.m. Main Library, Stafford Room B (also Mar. 11, 18)                  |
| March 5 | Seed Saving Workshop. 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Patio Area                                      |
| March 5 | Go Workshop. 3:00 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room                                  |
| March 6 | "The Sky is the Limit" Alameda Women Artists Reception. 1:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room |
| March 7 | Intermediate Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room                       |
| March 8 | Introduction to Computers. 10:00 a.m. Main Library, Computer Lab (also Mar 15, 29)            |
| March 8 | Grand Re-opening Bay Farm Island Library. 2:00 p.m. Bay Farm Island Library                   |
| March 8 | Alameda Great Books Club. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Family Study Room                           |
| March 9 | Introduction to MS Access. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Computer Lab (also Mar 16)                 |

March 10 Alameda Backyard Gardeners. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

March 13 Revolutionary Landscapes. 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

March 14 Advanced Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room

March 14 Alameda Library Book Club. 6:30 p.m. Main Library, Family Study Room

March 14 Parent – Child Book Club. 7:00 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room

March 15 Wreath Crafts (children). 3:30 p.m. West End Library

March 16 Wreath Crafts (children). 3:30 p.m. Bay Farm Island Library

March 17 Medieval Tournament Re-enactment. 3:30 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

March 19 West End Library CLOSED for public art installation

March 19 Wreath Crafts (children). 2:00 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room

March 19 Backyard Farmer/Urban Consumer Resource Fair. 11:00 a.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

March 20 Film Screening: Locavore. 1:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

March 21 Beginning Book Club. 3:30 p.m. Main Library Felker Programming Room

March 22 Photo Editing with Picassa. 6:00 p.m. Main Library, Computer Lab (also Mar 29)

March 23 Author Elise Cooke. 7:00 p.m. Bay Farm Island Library

March 26 Film Screening: Locavore. 6:00 p.m. West End Library

March 29 Grow Great Veggies. 6:30 p.m. Main Library, Felker Programming Room

March 30 Library Legislative Day, Sacramento. Time TBA

March 31 Author Novella Carpenter. *Farm City*. 7:00 p.m. Main Library, Stafford Room

If you have any questions about the items to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you would like to discuss these or any other items, please email me at [jchisaki@ci.alameda.ca.us](mailto:jchisaki@ci.alameda.ca.us) or give me a call at 747-7747. I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday evening.

Sincerely,



Jane Chisaki  
Library Director